

much mended, the forwardest of them is on the lower Part of c. c. our Eastern Shore with Intention to exercise the Hands she has and endeavour to get more. The Defence is lying here, merely for want of Hands, she has now about 60 and wants at least as many more, we are using our utmost Endeavours to get them, but the Privateers and the high Wages given by Merchants, make it very difficult to get men of any Sort. We have for some Time expected Cap^t Nicholson down, in the Virginia, though all we know is from Report, having little Correspondence with him. From some late Instances of his Conduct, there is no great Probability of our Wishes or Advice influencing him in any Degree, yet, if there was any Hope of clearing the Bay with his Assistance, the Council and I would instantly Request it, and, if necessary apply to Congress, for Orders to him; but Commodore Brooke and Cap^t Cooke, concurring in opinion with us, that our Force collected, would be too much inferior to that of a forty Gun Ship and Frigate, in a situation where the Row Gallies could not probably act with Effect, any Application to Cap^t Nicholson or the Congress would, it is thought, be useless. We have no Doubt but the Congress would, if it was in their Power, order a Frigate or two round from Delaware, but, from what we are informed, it is impracticable to get them out, there being, according to the last Accounts from Philadelphia nine Men of War within, or about the Capes of that Bay, they have been too successful in their Depredations on the American Trade. As soon as we can get any of our Row Gallies ready they will be ordered down, in such a Situation, that they may be easily collected to take the Advantage of a Calm and with Orders to act in Concert with yours, it is our Idea that, in a Calm, an Attack might be decisive against a Man of War, and that if the Row Gallies should be worsted, they might, almost certainly retreat. We have only the Number of eighteen Pounders, appropriated by our Legislature, to our Forts; some of our Gallies would well carry twenty four's perhaps thirty two's; the Congress agreed with the Mess^{rs} Hughes's for a great Number of heavy Cannon, some of which, we hope, will soon be made, we propose to apply for a few of them for our Gallies, and shall write pressing to the Contractors to forward them. We look on this State equally interested with yours, in the Defence of the Bay, are heartily disposed to contribute to it, and are indeed sorry that it is not in our Power, jointly with your State to effect it.

Governor Henry

We are &^{ca}

April 30th 1777.

C. B.

Present the same members, as on yesterday.

Ordered That the Commissary of Stores deliver to Captain George Cooke Cruder sufficient to make ninety Hammocks